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Sermon Delivered at the Dedication of a Church.

2 COR. 4, 5.

The voice of rejoicing is in the tabernacle of the righteous! Our beloved Emmaus congregation is celebrating to-day. The Lord has dealt bountifully with her. He has given her the desires of her heart, He has put a new song into her mouth, even praise unto our God. The Emmaus congregation has to-day dedicated this beautiful and delightful house to the service of the Triune God. No doubt, to-day, as never before, she, together with her faithful pastor, has said and sung those words of David: "How amiable are Thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts! One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to enquire in His temple."

This service to-night is to close the festivity of the day. For two reasons it is to be an English service. First, although the Emmaus congregation worships as yet exclusively in the German language, it is united in the closest manner with the English-speaking Lutherans of this city, and as they rejoice with her to-day, so she bids them come and be welcome in her new house of worship, and partake with her of the joys which the heavenly Bridegroom has showered upon her. Again, the Emmaus congregation is fully aware that she is surrounded on every hand by people who do not understand the German language, who therefore have little opportunity to become well acquainted with this church and its real, actual doctrinal position, nature, and purpose. These good neighbors are perhaps even in danger of being prejudiced in one way or the other against this church. To give these people an opportunity to form a just estimate and a true opinion of the nature and purpose of this church is another purpose of this evening service.

Permit me, then, upon the basis of the words of Holy Writ which I have read to you, to present to you and elucidate this truth :

**THE PURPOSE OF THIS CHURCH IS THE GLORIFICATION OF
JESUS CHRIST FOR THE SALVATION OF MAN.**

I.

First, then, let us see how this church is to glorify Christ.

In our text St. Paul states the nature and purpose of his preaching by saying: "We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord." St. Paul declares that he preaches to glorify Christ. If you read this entire epistle you will find that the apostle felt the necessity of defending himself against calumny and detraction. He does this by discussing his whole life and work in the presence of the Corinthians as well as in other congregations. And in our text he, as it were, summarizes the whole dissertation in these pointed words: "We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake." In these words St. Paul gives to the Corinthians a striking presentation of the one purpose of his work. He states: I do not preach to glorify myself, or my party, but to glorify Jesus Christ. And these words are just exactly adequate to express the purpose of this church. Its purpose is the glorification of Christ Jesus the Lord.

In this house divine services will be held consisting of preaching, prayer, singing, and the administration of the sacraments. But we may unite all these acts into one—*preaching*. For in every hymn and prayer and in each administration of the sacraments the church *preaches*. And again, the entire service culminates in the preaching of the sermon. Now the avowed purpose of all this preaching shall be the glorification and lifting up of Jesus Christ. This purpose will not only be stated and avowed, it will be actually accomplished. The glorification of our Savior will not only be the motto or shibboleth of this church, but the goal earnestly and sincerely aimed at and really and actually attained. How? In this way, that all, whatsoever it be, that is in any way antagonistic to the glory of Christ is scrupulously excluded from the service of this church. All that would displace or usurp or interfere with the position of preeminence which Christ alone shall occupy here is not given one inch of space in this church. As St. Paul could truthfully declare: We preach not ourselves, we preach not our own wisdom or holiness or ability, just so we here may truthfully assert: We preach not ourselves, not our own *wisdom*. This church, together with the whole faithful Lutheran church, allows nothing to be preached in its church but the wisdom and Word of Jesus Christ.

Our enemies have called us Lutherans to mark us as the followers of a man and not of Christ, but we call ourselves Lutherans just because Luther taught no wisdom but that of Jesus Christ, and would acknowledge no word of man, but confessed, preached, and wrote the Word of Christ alone. This Word of Christ is found in the Bible. Every word that is Christ's Word is found in Holy Scripture. Whatever is not found in the Bible is not the Word of Christ. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God. When Moses wrote the first word of Genesis, the first Word of Christ was written, and when John penned the last word of Revelation, the last Word of Christ to the world had been written. We expect no other till He appears in the clouds of heaven to judge the quick and the dead. Therefore this church will preach what the Bible teaches, that, all of that, and nothing but that. No man and no body of men, no church and no officer or bishop of the church, aye, no angel from heaven dare add, take away, or change the words of this Book. The Bible closes with the solemn words: "If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book." In preaching this Word we glorify Christ and lift Him up, for in this Word Christ alone is given the floor, and speaks to all men.

'Tis true, there is in our day a sad defection from this position. Many even of those who are called Christians refuse to give to the Bible this its due value as the Word of Christ. They criticise it and pretend to find errors in it. But as for this church, it unites with all faithful Lutherans in declaring that it prefers to believe in the inerrancy of the Bible rather than in the inerrancy of its critics. When on the mount Christ was transfigured, the voice of God was heard from heaven saying: "This is my beloved Son—*hear ye Him!*" Christ is the only teacher of the Church. All that we teach and preach is but a constant repetition, application, illustration, and emphasizing of Christ's Word. That is the purpose for which this beautiful church has been built, to provide a place where we may publish Christ's wisdom and Word *exclusively*. Come here and you will not be offered the dreams of fanatics, not the speculations of reason, not the guesses of science falsely so called, not the utterances or decretals of a pope or a bishop or a synod or a congregation, but the Word and wisdom of the Son of God. There is but one light to shine in this place, the Sun of righteousness, that lamp and that light of which all Christians confess that it is

the infallible star of truth guiding all who follow its leading to heaven, namely, the Word of Christ. Nor is any part of it to be ignored or quietly passed over. Every teaching of Christ is to be heard here. Is there a command or a promise, an instruction or a warning, an admonition or a comfort which Christ offers? it must and will be heard here. What Christ praises will be praised here, although the world consider it ever so unworthy; what Christ condemns will be condemned here, though the world consider it ever so precious or innocent.

No one will expect me, however, to-night to enter upon a detailed statement of all the doctrines to be preached in this church and to show that each of them is but the statement of Christ upon the several subjects. I will only take the chief and central doctrine of this church—one that you will hear every time you come here. I will show two things concerning this doctrine: first, that it is the express teaching of Christ, and second, that it especially glorifies Christ.

The chief doctrine of this church is that truth which Christ teaches in all His chief sayings, for instance, in His conversation with Nicodemus, in His parables of the lost sheep, of the lost piece of silver, of the lost son, of the Pharisee and the publican, and which He taught almost every time He opened His lips. It is that truth which runs through all Scripture like a golden thread, and which St. Paul in one place expresses in these memorable words: "Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the Law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the Law: for by the works of the Law shall no flesh be justified," Gal. 2, 16. In his letter to the Romans the apostle teaches this same truth, and expresses it in still fewer words, thus: "We conclude that a man is justified by faith without the works of the Law." If Christ and the apostles did not teach this doctrine, then they taught nothing. This is the very doctrine of which St. Paul declares that whoever has lost it has lost Christ and God and hope, and will certainly perish. He says: "For I testify again to every man that Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the Law; ye are fallen from grace." By this doctrine we teach men that they are sinners and have deserved God's wrath and displeasure, death and damnation. The Law condemns not only those who have committed disgraceful crimes and have lost their reputation among men, the Law condemns all men because none have rendered that obedience which the Law demands. "There is no difference, for all have sinned and come short of the

glory of God." But we teach also that Christ died for all sinners and purchased for all a perfect pardon and a valid forgiveness for all sins. "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." We believe and teach that Jesus Christ, true God, begotten of the Father from eternity, and also true man, born of the Virgin Mary, is our Lord, who has redeemed us lost and condemned creatures, purchased and won us from all sins, from death, and from the power of the devil, not with gold or silver, but with His holy, precious blood and with His innocent suffering and death. This blessing, this gift, this redemption which Christ bought for all is now offered freely to all in the proclamation of the Gospel and is accepted by faith. By the preaching of this doctrine Christ is glorified, for it is His own Word. He Himself said: "The Son of man is come to save that which was lost." And in preaching of this doctrine we show that our salvation is Christ's work, and Christ's work alone, that no man can save himself nor his brother, but that without our holiness, wisdom, or strength *Christ, Christ alone*, saves us. To men we attribute sin, folly, weakness, and the life that perisheth. But we preach *Christ*, that in *Him* there is the righteousness which is valid and acceptable with God—the wisdom that is true and the power that saves. Trust Him and you can say:

All that I was, my sin, my guilt,
My death, was all my own;
All that I am I owe to Thee,
My gracious God, alone.

You see, the purpose of this church thus is to glorify Christ and to lift Him up as the only Savior for all men, as that which His name bespeaks, Jesus Christ—the Savior whom God has anointed to be the Savior of all men. Have we not good cause, then, to rejoice? Not only the Emmaus congregation, but we all? Should we not wish this congregation God's richest blessings? There were those who cursed and persecuted our Savior, who scourged Him, struck Him, spat upon His holy face, crowned Him in bitter mockery with piercing thorns, and nailed Him to the cross; there are those who to-day despise, slander, and ridicule Him. Praise God, there are some who glorify Him. Here, here is a house in which He is to be glorified. Here are people who will proclaim His glory. O blessed place and blessed people! Faint not in holding Him up who hung upon the cross for you. All who love Him rejoice with you. God strengthen you to show here again that you live unto Him who died for you and rose again. God delights in this house, all Christians will love it, for here Christ will be glorified.

II.

"But," someone may ask, "is such glorification of Christ of any benefit to men?" We are living in a utilitarian age. Men are ever ready to ask the question, "Of what benefit is this or that?" "Does it benefit mankind?" "Is anybody the better off for it?" So here some will ask, "Is such glorification of Christ of any value to poor suffering humanity?" St. Paul indicates the answer to this question when in the second part of our text he declares: "And ourselves *your servants* for Jesus' sake." In other words, St. Paul says: We preach Christ, and in doing this we serve you. Certainly, *this glorification of Christ is of the greatest value and benefit to man.*

But how?—In spiritual matters men, by nature, are so corrupt that the Bible calls them "dead in trespasses and sins," that is to say: man cannot, of his own reason and strength, do the least good before God. He cannot even believe or come to Christ to receive forgiveness of sin. He cannot even begin to make his peace with God. Oh, this is a terrible lost condition in which poor humanity is enthralled. How shall they be saved from it? There is but one thing, *and only one thing*, that can free man from this pitiable condition. That one saving remedy is that very glorification of Jesus Christ in the preaching of the Gospel. That very glorification of Christ, which is the purpose of this church, for which it has been built, that is the only thing which can and will take from poor fallen man his spiritual blindness and show him Christ, his Savior. That Gospel which glorifies and lifts up Christ, that preaching wherein Christ speaks and offers Himself as the Mediator between God and man, that Gospel is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth. Do you see now that this glorification of Christ, of which we have said so much, is of the greatest benefit to man? Do you see why St. Paul unites the preaching of Christ with the service of man saying: "We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves *your servants* for Jesus' sake"?

In fact, beloved friends, there is nothing that men need so much, there is nothing by which we could benefit them more than by doing that for which this church has been built—the preaching of Christ's Word and Christ's work. Hospitals and schools, government buildings and asylums, these all, if rightly conducted, are fountains of blessing to men, but at most the work carried on in them only ameliorates the condition of man here upon earth for a time. The work of glorifying Christ, however, saves man from all ills forever. The man who is dismissed cured from a hospital will fall sick again, but the one whom the Gospel brings to heaven will never leave it again. The graduate from the highest school has

only a very limited knowledge, but the saint made perfect in light knows even as he is known. Other things may help and aid man in a manner, for a time, but the word that glorifies Christ is the only thing that makes of man a true child of God here and an heir, a rich heir of heaven hereafter. Nothing gives repentance to the wandering and lost sheep but the Word of God. Nothing can lead the trembling sinner to find peace in Christ but the Gospel of Christ. Nothing can keep the Christian in the true faith but the same Word that first of all brought him to Christ. How was the Christian Church founded? How was it built? How did it prove the greatest blessing to every land and people? Through the glorification of Jesus Christ in the preaching of the Gospel. Indeed, the raising of Christ, our Savior, on high by proclaiming His Word is not an undertaking valueless to man, but of supreme and greatest benefit to all men. It is a work that blesses the infant in the cradle, the youth surrounded by temptation, the man and woman in the battle of life, and the weary pilgrim who is about to lay down his burden. O blessed purpose that honors Him who was despised for our sakes and saves us who are lost without the Gospel! Blessed the church that can truthfully say: "*We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake.*"

Such is the blessed purpose of this new house of worship, such is the purpose of all its hymns, prayers, and preaching: the glorification of Christ for the salvation of man. Who will not, then, rejoice to-day to see this beautiful temple dedicated to such a lofty and blessed work? Certainly, we all must feel to-day, and as often as we see or think of it: Thank God for that church—it is none other than the house of God, it is the gate of heaven! How willingly should every member contribute to its support and aid in its work! What, hesitate to lend a helping hand in honoring Him who did not hesitate to have His hand nailed to the cross for you? What, would you not help a fallen child from its danger in our streets where a car or a wheel may crush out its life, and will you not help to save your fellow men from eternal perdition? They who are Christ's and have the spirit of Christ will love this house and rejoice in its efforts and labors.

Brethren, I know that I am voicing the thought and prayer of all Christians here when I say to you members of Emmaus congregation what Rebekah's kinsfolk said to her: "*Thou art our sister, be thou the mother of thousands of millions, and let thy seed possess the gates of them which hate them!*" And bless God in the words of the psalmist: "They shall prosper that love thee! Peace be within thy walls, and prosperity within thy palaces." Amen and Amen! M. S. S.

Mission Sermon.

MATT. 10, 8.

These words are taken from the commission with which Christ sent out the twelve apostles the first time. From the connection in which they are found it is evident that they have reference to the healing of the sick and other miracles, for in the words immediately preceding them the Lord says: "Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils," and then He adds: "Freely ye have received, freely give." The apostles, then, were not to use this gift of miracles for the purpose of making money, they were not to receive any pay for the cures they effected by the laying on of hands, as they easily might have done, for well-to-do people would no doubt have gladly paid them well for such sure and infallible help in sickness and even death. But no, says the Savior, you shall receive no pay for these miracles; "freely ye have received, freely give." This power of performing miracles was given them for a higher, nobler purpose. By it they were to introduce themselves as the messengers of God. These miracles were their divine credentials to their fellow men by means of which they were to gain a hearing with them for the Gospel news they were proclaiming, the news that the kingdom of heaven was at hand, that the Savior had come. By means of this power they were to gain adherents for their Master among the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

These words, "Freely ye have received, freely give," therefore, had a wider application. Freely, without temporal remuneration, the apostles were to go and preach the Gospel news to their people. Freely, by grace, the Savior had called them for His disciples, had made them His companions, and had taught them the blessed truths of the Gospel, and freely they were therefore to carry this Gospel to others, seeking no earthly gain or remuneration, asking nothing but board and lodging from those to whom they should come in the course of their missionary tours. And we know that the apostles, mindful of their Master's words, did labor freely in behalf of His kingdom, seeking not earthly wealth and fortune, but consuming themselves in the service of the Lord, subsisting upon the free gifts of the church.

But, my friends, we would be badly mistaken if we were to think that these words applied only to the apostles. No, they pertain to all Christians at all times. As long as there is any necessity for preaching the Gospel, as long as there are sinners to be converted and saved, so long it is the duty of Christians to provide

means and men to spread the Gospel news in all the world, so long there is need of men that will devote their lives to the service of the Lord, and so long there will also be need for the support of these men by the Church of God. Let us, then, apply to ourselves these words of our text:

“FREELY YE HAVE RECEIVED, FREELY GIVE.”

I.

We, too, have received freely. We have not deserved in any way to be so richly and abundantly blessed in spiritual, heavenly gifts. We have not deserved it that Christ should come down from heaven and redeem us; we have not deserved it that God should call us into the kingdom of His Son by the voice of the Gospel; we have not deserved it that we, above and before others, should be in possession of the pure doctrine. Nay, it is all pure grace of God. Freely we have received.

Indeed, my hearers, salvation and all that it includes is a free gift of God's grace, and it is such for all men. God did not owe it to man to provide a way of salvation for him. God would have acted perfectly just and right if He had allowed all men to run headlong to eternal damnation. They simply would have received their just due and could not have accused Him of injustice, because they had deserved no better doom.

For we must remember that, when God created man, He created him in His own image, in perfect holiness and righteousness. He, moreover, created him for the enjoyment of unmingled happiness here in this world and of eternal bliss in the world to come. Man, as he came forth out of the hand of his Maker, was a perfectly fit object for heaven, and had things remained as they were at the beginning, all men, all descendants of Adam, would infallibly have gone there.

But what happened? What did man do? Man turned his back upon his Creator. He voluntarily transgressed the command which he had received from God, and thus fell away from God and became His enemy. Ever since that fateful day all men are sinful and corrupt in their nature. They are born wicked, their hearts and minds are bent upon evil only, and they are incapable of doing anything that is good. They turn away with aversion from their Creator, hate Him, and voluntarily yield themselves into the service of Satan, the arch-enemy of God, thus rushing headlong and willfully down into their own everlasting destruction. In short, man had, by his own fault, plunged into temporal and eternal misery, out of which he could not, yea, and would not extricate himself.

Of this dire calamity of the human race God, then, was in no wise the cause. He desired man's temporal and eternal happiness, having created him with this end in view, and having given man the power to enjoy and to retain this happiness. He only wanted man to pass a brief state of probation, in order that he might show himself worthy of that happiness which God had intended to give him. Surely, when God had thus done everything that could be done to make man happy both here and in the next world, and when man had thus ungratefully flung away that happiness, God did not owe it to man to open up another road to happiness and bliss. He did not owe it to man to send down His own dear Son into the world, to redeem the lost race of Adam by His own suffering, to release them from the fetters of sin, Satan, and hell, and to open to them once more the pearly gates of paradise. No, God did not owe man all this, it would have been right and just, if he had allowed all men to rush down into the damnation which they themselves had chosen and from which they did not even want to be set free. It was all the free gift of God's unbounded love, pity, and grace. It was in no wise deserved by man.

Neither did God need man in heaven for His own satisfaction or happiness. Nay, whether He took all the millions of men into heaven, or whether He cast them all out into outer darkness, that would have made not a particle of difference to Him, as far as His own happiness is concerned. For God is in Himself all-sufficient and infinitely blissful. No creature can either increase or decrease that happiness which is an inherent quality of His very being and essence. For as He is Himself unchangeable, so also His happiness and bliss could suffer no change of any kind. Even if He had therefore cast out all men from before His face into the place of torment; if He had not done anything to rescue them from the terrible doom which they had brought down upon themselves, He would have still remained the same eternal and infinitely blissful being. It was not for His own sake that He concluded to rescue fallen mankind, nay, it was alone for their sakes. It was because He took pity upon them, because, moved by an incomprehensible love for them, He did not want them to perish, that He resolved to send His Son for their redemption. It was a free, unmerited gift of grace on His part.

And not only is this true in general, that salvation is free and unmerited. Nay, also we in particular must confess that we have received salvation freely. Not only is the providing of a universal redemption a gracious gift of God, but also the application and appropriation of this redemption to every individual sinner is such a free work of God's grace and mercy alone.

Or can you offer any explanation, my friends, for the fact that we should be in possession of the Gospel, that we should have churches and pastors, that we should have Bibles and other good Christian books, while others, millions of others, should be without all these spiritual blessings? Are we any better than they? Have we deserved all these things? Most assuredly not! We are also born sinners, by nature subject to God's wrath and punishment, we, too, have deserved nothing but eternal damnation, and would have had nothing to complain about, if God had abandoned us to our eternal doom of woe, if He had left us to grope through this world without one ray of divine light to show us the way to heaven, until, in the agony of death, we would have gone down into the everlasting night of eternal despair. Yes, that would have served us right, for we are no better than the countless host of heathen, who are thus given up to hopeless darkness here in this world and in the next. We are not one particle better than they, and God would have had as much right to place us into the heathen lands of Asia and Africa, and the poor benighted Zulus of Africa or the Chinese of Asia into our civilized and Christian country. Ah, friends, that it is not so, that we have been born and raised in Christian homes and not in heathen lands, is but an unmerited gift of God's inscrutable grace and mercy. Freely, yea, freely we have received! Free, undeserved on our part, are the gifts of God's spiritual blessings which He has showered down upon us.

II.

Therefore *freely let us give*. Since God in His mercy has thus abundantly blessed us in spiritual things, without our merit or worthiness, let us now do our share towards helping others to become partakers of these blessings.

We owe this, in the first place, to our God. Is it not so, my friends, that for the infinite mercy and goodness of God which we have been and are still experiencing, in that He has made us His children and heirs of His promises, is it not so that we owe Him a debt of gratitude that we can never pay off? If you were in great trouble and a friend of yours had helped you out, would you not be considered a base wretch if you never so much as thanked him for it? How much more, then, ought we to thank God for having rescued us out of eternal misery and woe and having made us partakers of everlasting joy and happiness. The best way, however, of thanking God for His goodness is by doing good to our fellow men, especially by bringing them the good news of salvation, in order that they, too, may become partakers with us of that eternal happiness. God Himself has told us in His Word that this is the

best way of showing our gratitude. His own dear Son tells us that even a drink of cold water given to a disciple in His name shall not remain unrewarded. And in His description of the judgment day He says that the Judge will say to the righteous: "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." Of course, we could not do anything to God directly by which to make returns for His goodness and to show our gratitude for it, for He does not need our services in any manner whatsoever as He is all-sufficient to Himself. How could we poor worms do anything to benefit our almighty Creator? And because this is impossible, He graciously condescends to accept any services we render to our suffering fellow men as being done unto Himself, to give us an opportunity in this way to show our gratitude to Him. And, of course, there is no greater service that we could render to our fellow beings than to help in bringing them the Gospel of salvation, so that their souls may be rescued from eternal perdition.

In addition to this God has not only declared that such service rendered to our fellow men will be accepted by Him as having been done unto Himself; that alone ought certainly to be enough to incite us to this work. But we have another reason for engaging in this work: God has earnestly and plainly commanded it, He has made it our duty to help spread the Gospel, saying, "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature." These words were not spoken to the apostles only, but they are binding upon all Christians of all times. "Ye are a chosen generation," writes the Apostle Peter to all Christians, "ye are a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people, that ye should show forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvelous light." Yes, we are to show forth the praises of God to the Gentiles, the heathen, to all that have not yet the light of the Gospel. That is the Lord's will and command. He wants to use us as His instruments in the spreading of the Gospel. He could do this just as well without us. He has tens of thousands of angels at His disposal that He could send at one moment's notice into all the four corners of the earth to carry the glad tidings of salvation to all nations, but in His inscrutable wisdom He has decreed to use sinful men, to use us for this work. He has so decreed, and He has so commanded us—can we refuse? Can we refuse to obey the voice of Him to whom we owe not only our very life and existence, but to whom we owe, above all, the eternal salvation of our soul?

But this duty of giving freely what we have received freely we also owe to our fellow men. For are they not all of the same flesh

and blood as we are? Is not the whole human race one great family, bound together by ties of blood and kin? Are we not all descended from our one father Adam? How, then, can we refuse to extend a helping hand to those of our race who are yet lying in their blood, wounded to death by the poisonous bite of sin? Ah, if you had some near relative in great trouble, would you not willingly and readily do all you could to help him out of his trouble? Surely; if you refused to help, you must have a heart of flint, a heart altogether devoid of feeling and sympathy with the sufferings of others, and you would bring down upon yourselves the reproach of the whole community. But there are numberless members of our human race that are in the greatest of all calamities: they are yet without the saving knowledge of the Gospel of Christ, their Savior. These poor unfortunates are helplessly and hopelessly straying on the broad way that leads to damnation, unless we, who have the Gospel, bring it to them. For "there is no salvation in any other, and there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved," than the name of Jesus. Only by believing and trusting in this name can the sinner be saved. But, says Paul, Rom. 10, 14: "How shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? and how shall they preach except they be sent?" So, then, this is clearly taught by Scriptures: In order to be saved man must believe, and in order to believe the Gospel must be preached to him, and in order to have the Gospel preached to him preachers must be sent to him. And this can only be done by those who have the Gospel, by the Christians.

Now, then, my Christian friends, you are in possession of that Gospel, therefore do your duty towards your lost and erring fellow men! There are hundreds of millions of heathen out in Africa, Asia, and the islands of the sea, yea, there are millions in our country that are yet groping in darkness and need to have the light carried to them. Will you not help towards bringing this about? Can you bask in the sunshine of God's love and mercy and suffer your poor fellow men to drown in the gulf of perdition without even trying to save them? If you can do that, then mark my words: These heathen will cry out against you on the day of judgment, and God will require their blood at your hands!

Do you ask me, How can we help to save them? Why, we have already heard: by sending preachers, missionaries, to them. But, you say, I cannot go. Perhaps you cannot; but are there not others that can go? Is there not perhaps a young man in your congregation whom God has endowed with the necessary gifts for the

office of the holy ministry? Why not send him? Why should not this congregation go together and support that young man and educate him? Or is there no young man in your midst? Very well, there are other young men who are longing to become ministers, but have not the means to support themselves: give them your aid; they need it and they are worthy of it. And then there are other ways besides this in which you can aid the cause of Christ. There are already missionaries in the field, laboring to win souls for Christ; they must be supported. They have given themselves up to the service of the Lord, and "they that preach the Gospel shall live of the Gospel," St. Paul tells us. So give them your money, raise collections for mission purposes, and contribute liberally and cheerfully towards them. For "the Lord loveth a cheerful giver," and though you be poor and cannot give much, you certainly can give a little, and that little, if you give it in the right spirit, will not be rejected, as little as the widow's mite was rejected. And if the Lord has prospered you, so much the better, for then you can do so much more for His kingdom. For remember: you are not the owner of these goods, you are only steward over them, and when you die they will all be taken away from you again and you must render an account for the use you have made of them! If, then, instead of using your money in the service of God, you would clutch it tight in your purse and hoard it away, then that money, every dollar that you might have given, will cry out against you and become like a burning spark upon your conscience! Therefore, let us heed the words: "Freely ye have received, freely give." Amen.

Expository Sermon on Ps. 1, 1. 2.

MY CHRISTIAN FRIENDS:

The Psalms have always been regarded with a special affection and esteem by the Church, Jewish as well as Christian. Many were written especially for the temple services and sung by the Jewish choirs. Our early churchfathers tell us that the Christian Church of their days were wont to sing Psalms in their services. Psalms were continually to be heard in the fields and vineyards of Palestine. The Christian plowman, the Christian reaper, the Christian vinedresser, the Christian shepherd, the Christian boatman sang something of the "sweet singer's" inspired poetry. — This high affection and esteem entertained toward the Psalms is easy of explanation. A noted theologian, though a heretic, has styled the

Book of Psalms "an anatomy of all parts of the soul," and goes on to say: "There is no single feeling the image of which is not reflected in this mirror. Our griefs, sorrows, fears, doubts, hopes, cares, anxieties, in short, all the agitations of the soul have here been represented by the Holy Spirit." The Psalms contain many precious promises of help and deliverance; they cheer us with the relation of God's mighty deeds in the past. The energy and warmth of devotion exhibited in them stir up our hearts to greater praise and thanksgiving. It is quite explainable, then, that the Christian gladly turns to them and bathes his spirit in these refreshing springs.

I will take occasion in the future to expound the chief Psalms to you. I am assured that a better understanding of them cannot fail to be productive of much good; they will instruct, edify, comfort, and keep us in the paths of righteousness.—The First Psalm lies before us for consideration. The first two verses of it will occupy our attention to-day. The Lord bestow His quickening grace upon us and fix to-day's message in our hearts.

I.

"Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful." The inspired writer begins with calling blessings and benedictions upon the man whom he describes. The blessings of God rest upon him. Who is this man? "The righteous," v. 6. Do you know who the righteous man is, and why he is so called? He is not so called because of any righteousness of his own. You, my Christian friends, and I have our burden of sin, but nothing which might be called righteousness, if examined and scrutinized by God, if weighed in His accurate scales. The righteous man is he who has been made righteous before God through the Savior, and to whom Christ's merits are imputed by faith. We must not think that the children of the Old Testament covenant had a different way of becoming righteous from the way revealed in the Gospel of Jesus. The only difference in our faith and in the faith of Abraham and other pious Israelites was in the fact that they believed in Him who was to come, whilst we believe in Him who has come. To prove this to you I need but refer to the Savior's saying: "Abraham rejoiced to see my day, and he saw it and was glad." How? Centuries separated them. Ah, it was the seeing with the eye of faith. Abraham had the Messianic promises; their light was sufficient. Jesus also would never have said that God is the Father of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob if they were not justified by faith. Ps. 32,

1. 2 proves the same: "Blessed is the man whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered . . . , unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity." Here we have our doctrine of imputation. As you know, St. Paul quotes this passage to strengthen his argument that we are saved by faith, not by works (cf. Rom. 4).

So he is the righteous man who has the Savior's righteousness and is at peace with his God. Now is it surprising that the psalmist calls him "*blessed*"? Can you conceive a greater blessedness or happiness than having God on your side, God's tender love and almighty power, Him who shapes your life towards the desired goal, who encompasses you with His goodness, forgiving your sins so that your strength is renewed like the eagle's? Paul says: "If God be for us, who can be against us?" This is the triumphant defiance which every Christian casts into the teeth of sin, Satan, hell, or evil conscience. — My Christian hearer, you may be in the deepest poverty, you may be crippled, bedridden, bowed with the decrepitude of years, you may be persecuted and assailed, your eyes wet with the tears of grief, yes, in the last agonies of death: write this clearly into your heart: You are blessed of God, if only your heart rests confidently in Christ.

The psalmist describes the righteous man, whom he has called blessed. He describes him negatively: "That walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful." You notice the gradation: "*ungodly, sinner, scornful*." These terms denote the unchristians according to the more or less pronounced way with which they manifest their disregard for Christ; for as you know, there are two divisions only: sinner or saint. There is no neutral line in religion. All unchristians, however, are not alike. There are those who live virtuous and reputably, but are not concerned about their soul's salvation. They are indifferent and careless. These are the "*ungodly*." The "*sinners*" are they who live in open sin and regard not morality, nor the principles of right and justice. Others, again, ridicule religion and pour contempt and scorn on sacred things, mocking hell, heaven, prayer, Bible, eternity. These are the "*scornful*," men whose consciences are seared.

Now the ungodly are said to have a "*counsel*." What is their counsel or advice? This: they say to others with whom they associate and converse, as they say to themselves: Do good and fear not; live clean; respect your neighbor's rights; pay your debts — and all is well. Praying cannot help you; church-going cannot help you; go to heaven on your own merits. — The sinners are said to have a "*way*." All sinners have not the same way. The paths

which lead to hell are numerous. The drunkard has his way; the profligate has his way; the miser has his way; the dishonest merchant has his way; the impure woman has her way; the gambler has his way.—The scornful are said to have a “*seat*.” This seat may be in the saloon; for a drunkard knows not what his mouth speaks; when a man’s brain is muddled, he becomes profane and scoffs. This seat are all places where men congregate, where dirt is upon their lips and blasphemy in their mouth. This seat may be a lofty one, but, nevertheless, near the gates of hell. It may be the pulpit, where men, under the pretense of honoring God, pick the Bible to pieces. It may be the lecture-room, where unbelieving instructors vent their scoff and scorn, a scorn often clothed so as to appear a virtue, a zeal for truth. This seat may be the infidel on the rostrum or on the corner of the streets. You may set it down as a truth: he who scoffs and ridicules the Bible and religion is either a fool or a liar; in most cases, both. It is the greatest folly which he can commit to belie his own conscience. Therefore God has smitten them with blindness like the Sodomites before Lot’s house. God’s curse upon them! They are in most cases beyond recall; they have hardened their heart willfully against the truth.

Such are the unchristians, distinguished according to the manner in which their disrespect for Christ manifests itself. Now what is the Christian’s attitude toward them? The psalmist says: *He walketh not, nor standeth, nor sitteth* in their company. And this is what I would impress upon you. Shun the company of such as I have described; avoid their pestilential intercourse, as you value your peace with God. He who associates with such as are spiritually careless will imbibe their carelessness; he who is on friendly terms with lewd and dissolute people takes his life into his hands. I may add: No Christian young man, no Christian young woman has the right to be seen at public amusement halls and theaters; no Christian young man, no Christian young woman can lay aside her Christian modesty so as to tread the floors of a dancing hall. These are the places where souls are entrapped, where Satan, the fiendish fowler, lays his snares. It is the testimony of all thoughtful people, churchly and unchurchly, who have given this subject serious thought, that, next to the theater, the modern dance has contributed most to the immorality and sin which so frightfully and hideously prevails. *You* have no promise that God will protect you if you expose yourself to temptation. Keep aloof also from houses of worship where ostensibly God is honored, but the Bible impeached. Flee the atheist’s and infidel’s venomous utterances. It is easier to take poison than to get rid of it.

II.

In the second verse the psalmist describes the Christian positively: "But his delight is in the Law of the Lord, and in His Law doth he meditate day and night." The "Law of the Lord" is the inspired volume, the written Word of God. At the psalmist's times it did not exceed the five books of Moses and a number of the historical books of the Bible. The title "Law" was applied to them, because God's laws formed the central part. Beside the laws, these books contained the early history of the race from which the Jews descended; the revelation by word and act of the Lord Jehovah; the promises of the future Messiah and of forgiveness of sins and life eternal through Him; promises of loyalty; curses upon apostasy. It was natural, then, that these inspired books which traced God's hand in the destiny of his race and promised him succor in the day of trouble were dear to the pious Israelite and an object of his meditations. — *Our* written Word is more complete. God has accorded us a fuller light of revelation. Let us thank Him for it! The important question, however, is not whether we *have* a Bible, but whether we "*delight* in it" and "*meditate*" therein. The psalmist describes the Christian. You profess to be Christians. Do you, then, delight and meditate in the Bible? There are many Christians who lay claim to a negative kind of Christianity: they associate not with sinners, nor keep company with scoffers and blasphemers, yet they delight not in the Bible, nor do its words enter into their meditation. Surely, God's blessings do not rest upon them.

My Christian hearer, let me give you some reasons why you should *delight* in your Bible and love it. Surely you love those who show you kindness, who are your staunch friends in the day of adversity, who give you valuable advice. Why, then, do you not love your Bible? The Bible is the best friend. It confers upon you unspeakable kindnesses. Has it not taught you to believe in Christ and to find a remedy for sin and an accusing conscience? Has it not comforted you by assuring you that God's almighty wings are spread out over you? Like a faithful monitor has it not kept you from sin and the bodily taint and ravages of sin? To the Bible you owe the preservation of your faith, if you have any faith at all; to its influence God's abiding grace and mercy. In it flow the rivers of pardon, of promise, of comfort, of holy joy. They have refreshed you in the past and continue to refresh you. No friend will stick closer to you; the advice which it gives you is the soundest. Follow it and you will never regret it. I sum up: all the material and spiritual blessings which you enjoy are conferred upon you through the medium of the Bible. The Bible is, therefore, your best earthly friend.

If you but *realize* your great indebtedness, your delight in, and love of, the Bible will become quite spontaneous. You must not command a child to love its mother. I dare say, the Christian who must be constantly reminded and urged to take delight in the Bible, whipped like a stubborn cart-horse, is an unappreciative and ungrateful fellow. Appreciation and indifference are never foster-sisters. If you have bestowed your affections upon one, you will be found in his or her company. Very well, I assume that you love your Bible—or you have no claims upon God. Cultivate its companionship.

And this we are exhorted to do by the psalmist: “And in His Law doth he *meditate* day and night.” That is what we should do. We should meditate therein day and night. Observe that it does not say: And in His Law doth he *read* day and night. We cannot read the Bible day and night: Nor does God expect it of us. Meditation, though including reading, is by far more significant and comprehensive. You can meditate without damaging your interests or those of others. What does it mean to meditate? Let me try to explain it. Suppose you have read your Bible in the morning, and when you begin your daily toil you remember a verse or two; or if you have read a parable, remember its lesson; or if something of the epistles, an admonition. Take this along with you; think of them on your way; dwell and muse upon them in leisure moments; let your mind be occupied with them on your return. This is meditating.

Again, when you read your Bible, instead of reading hastily a half dozen pages, you read intelligently. There are such as read a dozen chapters at one sitting, possibly in order to atone for past negligence, or in order to finish the Bible within a certain time. The intention is laudable. It is, however, a zeal without knowledge. To read one verse and try to get at its meaning is more profitable to you than to read a whole chapter without thinking. Yet you should read more than one verse, but rationally, prayerfully, meditatively. Revolve the words of God in your mind, apply them to your own conditions—yes, store up precious verses by committing them to memory.

Again, when you come to church to hear the sermon—and every sermon is nothing else than an exposition of the “Law of the Lord”—and you make up your mind to lay hold on the main points, and, if necessary, strangle them in your mental grip, you are then meditating. And if, on leaving the house of worship, instead of criticising the sermon, you ask yourself whether there was nothing in that sermon for you, you are meditating. Again, if the

sermon has hit you fairly between the eyes, and instead of becoming impatient, angry, or vexed with the minister, you think it over dispassionately and thank him for the correction and resolve to do better, you are meditating. Yes, your morning and evening prayers, if spoken or read with devotion, are such meditations.

Often your meditations will assume the form of silent, inarticulate prayer. It is impossible to contemplate God's strict and severe Word without having your shortcomings forcibly brought home. It is but a step to prayer asking God for increased faith, courage, confidence in Him, etc. — Above all, do not fail to ask God's blessings upon your Bible readings. God alone can engender in us *love and delight* for His holy Word, He alone can make of us *meditative* readers. His Holy Spirit must illumine its pages and contents to us, or they will remain hidden from us.

"*Day and night.*" We might apply this also to the day of prosperity and the night of affliction. How many, when harassed and beset by poverty and sickness, seek God's countenance in the Bible; but when they are well and their worldly means increase, their ardor flags and diminishes. On the other hand, remember that God's Word is stored with precious promises of comfort. When the night of affliction comes upon you and it is your sad lot to mourn a departed friend, or God's ways are otherwise wrapped in darkness, seek Him in your Bible. It is able, and that right early, to dissolve the night, to steady your souls, and to make you children of peace and victory, in spite of outward adversity.

So, then, in these two verses the psalmist describes the Christian, his outer and inner life. God make each of us an ardent lover of the Bible. We will then not walk in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stand in the way of sinners, nor sit in the seat of the scornful, but be established in the path which leadeth to the throne of God. The blessedness which we here have by faith in Christ will there be consummated and made perfect. Amen. R. C. K.

Outlines for Sermons on the Gospel-Lessons.

Sixteenth Sunday after Trinity.

LUKE 7, 11—17.

The object of this narrative is to demonstrate the fact that Jesus Christ is God. Who can raise the dead but God? It is true that others also have raised the dead, *e. g.*, Elijah, Elisha, Peter, etc. But what a difference between these miracles of the apostles and prophets and those performed by the Lord Jesus! How did Elijah

cry unto the Lord that He should let the child's soul come into him again! How did Elisha beseech the Lord for the Shunamite boy, and what efforts did he make to restore the child to life, stretching himself upon him and warming his body! How earnestly did Peter pray for Dorcas until his prayer was heard and the dead woman opened her eyes! Jesus, however, never prayed to God for assistance when He raised the dead. Three instances have been recorded in the Gospels, and in each case Christ performed the miracle of raising the dead in His own name and by His own power. To the widow's son He says, "Young man, *I say unto thee, Arise!*"—to Jairus' daughter, "*Damsel, I say unto thee, Arise!*"—Lazarus He calls from decomposition into life and health by His almighty command, "*Lazarus, come forth!*" These miracles of raising the dead by virtue of His word show that Jesus is God.—Besides showing this, our Gospel is also suggestive of several important lessons.

LESSONS FROM THE NARRATIVE OF THE RAISING OF THE WIDOW'S SON.

- I. *Remember that you must die.*
- II. *We should entrust the bodies of our dead to the earth.*
- III. *We may lament the dead, but we should not sorrow as do those who have no hope.*

I.

Remember that you must die. Vv. 11. 12. Death spares no one. He may come to you at any place, at any time, under any circumstances.

a. At any place. Nain means, The fair, the beautiful. The city had a beautiful site, on a steep hill, with fresh air and fair surroundings. But what do we see coming down the slope? A funeral procession.—There is no city, village, hamlet, no land where death does not wield his scepter. Sin is the cause of this, Rom. 5, 12. You may prolong your days by a change of climate, but you will not escape death anywhere when your time has come. Shun the places in which you would not like to be overtaken by death!

b. At any time. It was a young man whose corpse was borne out of the gates. Youth is no barrier against death. Death may come most unexpectedly at any time of our life. He spares neither the infant in the cradle, nor the feeble sage upon the couch, nor the blooming youth, nor the middle-aged. Beware of procrastination. Do not put off your repentance and conversion. Provide for your soul in time, for death may come without warning, Is. 38, 1.

c. Under any circumstances. Death had claimed a widow's only son. Probably she was poor and her son was her only sup-

port. Often death ensues under peculiar circumstances, and man is tempted to murmur against the Almighty and to criticise His dealings with us. Christians know that all things must work together for good to them that love God and bow in submission to His will, John 13, 7. Job 1, 21.

II.

We should entrust the bodies of our dead to the earth. The young man who died at Nain was borne out upon a bier to be buried, to be laid in a grave and covered with earth, as the Jews were accustomed to dispose of their dead.

a. In our days the old heathen custom of cremating the dead has been revived. Crematories are the proper places for those who do not believe in the resurrection of the body and prefer hell to heaven. The oven in which the limbs are twisted and distorted by the excessive heat is a true picture of hell. It is not the natural way of disposing of the dead. Rank unbelievers, atheists, order their own cremation to show that they are not Christians.

b. We should not cremate, but bury our dead. True it is that it does not affect a Christian's soul whether his body be burned up or slowly decompose in the earth. Martyrs have been burned at the stake, and many Christians have found death in the flames; yet their souls went to God immediately, Rev. 14, 13. But the scriptural way to dispose of the dead is to bury them. The patriarchs and all the children of God were buried, not cremated. As cremation pictures hell, so does burial picture the resurrection unto eternal life in heaven, 1 Cor. 15, 42, 43.

III.

We may lament the dead, but we should not sorrow as do those who have no hope.

a. The widow wept, and Jesus did not mean to censure her for that. We may lament our dead and express our grief and sorrow by the tears which we shed over the remains. This is but human and natural. Abraham, the father of all believers, wept and mourned for his wife Sarah when she died. Stephen, the first martyr, was carried to his burial by devout men, and they made great lamentation over him. Even Jesus wept at Lazarus' grave.

b. But we should not mourn and sorrow as do those who have no hope; for Jesus has destroyed our last enemy, death, vv. 13—15. Jesus is invisibly with us to this day when death has entered our homes, and when our hearts are filled with grief, and He still says, Weep not! As I raised the widow's son, so will I raise again on the last day the body which you entrust to the earth. Weep not!

As I delivered the son to the widow, so will I reunite you with those who have died in my name, and you shall meet them again in a land where there is no more death. Weep not! I have borne your griefs and carried your sorrows. By my painful suffering and bitter death upon the cross I have gained eternal life for you, John 11, 25. 1 Cor. 2, 9.—As Christ comforted the widow, so does He comfort us by His divine Word. Let us moderate our grief and show thereby that we believe His divine Word. H. S.

Sermon Outline on Luke 12, 16—21.

In these words our Lord presents to us the picture of a covetous man. Covetousness is not a new and unheard-of subject, but it is one that must be kept constantly before us, for, first, it is not an ordinary sin, but a fountain and source of innumerable sins. "The love of money is the root of all evil." Secondly, it is a sin which is generally considered a virtue by the world. Many a worldly-minded man will grieve to see his boy incline to drunkenness, but he will rejoice to see him love money. It is a "respectable" sin which we must expose. In the third place, few know that they are living in this sin. A bishop said that in the twenty-five years of his office all manner of sin had been confessed to him, but no one had ever confessed the sin of covetousness. And yet it is so common. How necessary, therefore, that we should give heed to our Savior's presentation of

THE COVETOUS FOOL.

I. *He gives careful thought to his crops, but forgets to care for his own safety.*

a. His ground had brought forth plentifully. This caused him to consider how to preserve this plentiful crop. He did not want one bushel wasted. He saw he needed more room; he planned and calculated and studied to save every grain, but—he forgot that *he*, he himself, his own soul and life, needed attention and care, and so it happened that the fruit of his land was well cared for, but *he himself was lost*. That very night God took his life and he perished in his sin. *What a fool!*

b. But, tell me, is this not a daily occurrence among men? Men and women will sit and think, study, plan, scheme, and calculate to preserve their lands, money, houses, goods, and property, that not one dollar be lost, and that they make the best investment and manage their business for the greatest profit, but their own life and soul is entirely neglected. How anxiously some scan the

market reports, and how much time is given to close examination of business conditions, but God's Word, the only light and food for their souls, is left unheard and unheeded. What is the consequence? Like the covetous fool in our text, many have gathered a large fortune here, and then—death comes, takes them from their hoarded goods, and casts them into hell. *What fools!*

Awake! Has this folly crept into your heart? Is it at your door and seeking entrance? Let Christ's voice warn you. What is the man who, on a sinking ship, ties the life preserver about his bag of gold and forgets to provide means of safety for himself, so that, when all is over, his bag of gold is swimming on the waters and he himself is at the bottom of the ocean? He is a fool. But he that leaves large estates here in this world and himself sinks into hell is a bigger fool.

II. *He speaks of the goods which God has intrusted to him as if they belonged to himself.*

a. Hear him speak: "*My fruits — my barns — my goods.*" They were *not* his own. God gave them to him for a while to use them for His glory and for the welfare of his fellow men, and then to turn them over to his Maker and give an account of his dealings with his Master's goods. But he dealt with them as if they belonged to him to do as he liked, and he used them for his own carnal ease and lusts, v. 19. His Master came upon him unawares, and the unfaithful steward perished shamefully. *What a fool!*

b. But is this not a common folly? Are there not many such fools? Nothing that we have is ours to keep forever. God gives us all gifts of body, soul and mind, and of property. We are to use them to His glory and for the welfare of our fellow men. The day is drawing near when we must give an account. God knows all and can find everyone. How foolish to be untrue to our trust! Besides, "*Whose shall those things be which thou hast provided?*" We must leave our goods behind, and our very enemies may use them for our or our loved ones' harm. It is not a rare thing for the parent to lose his soul in gathering and hoarding goods, while his children lose their souls in squandering it. It is not a rare thing for a father to gather wealth which some scoundrel of a son-in-law uses for the shame, disgrace, and torture of the very child of that father. Has God blessed you with wealth? Be wise and use it aright, lest a curse cling to it and those who have it after you, perhaps your loved ones, suffer in the use of it. Many a young man has been ruined because his parents' wealth robbed him of all earnestness of purpose. A man who builds a fire to warm himself and his household, but makes it so hot that he and his own perish in the flames is a fool.

III. *He thought that his soul could find rest and satisfaction in earthly possessions.*

a. V. 19: "I will say to my soul, Soul thou hast much goods laid up for many years; *take thine ease*, eat, drink, and be merry." He thought, Now I have what I have longed for, an abundance of goods. I need no longer toil and vex myself, I have rest unto my soul and I will enjoy it to the full. But that night his soul entered the place where there is howling and gnashing of teeth, and where their worm dieth not and their fire is not quenched. *What a fool!* Aye, even if he had lived on, he would not have found that peace, rest, and satisfaction for his soul which he thought he had provided.

b. How many thousands there are like this covetous fool who think that wealth and great riches must certainly bring happiness. Do they not know that "a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth?" (V. 15.) If wealth brings peace and ease, why is it that so many rich commit suicide? Why is it, then, that a foolish rumor often precipitates a financial panic—men and women rushing to the banks and trust companies as if mad, frantic with fear that their money is lost? Do you not know that beside the few who would eat, but have no meat there are legions who have meat, but cannot eat because disease prevents them? Will money give ease to a wounded conscience? Will houses and lands drive away the thought of judgment and hell? At times and for a little while, but—make no mistake, the day will come when those who sought peace and rest for their souls in the same manner as this covetous fool will cry out for the hills to fall on them and the mountains to cover them. Our souls can find peace only where the voice is heard, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and *I will give you rest*," in *Jesus Christ*, the Savior of sinners, in His blessed Word. Oh, therefore do not seek gold and neglect that which alone brings peace and ease. "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and its righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." "One thing is needful!" (Hymn No. 240, 1. 2.)

M. S. S.

Sermon Outline on 2 Tim. 3, 15—17.

The above text submits a plain and concise statement of the Bible to our consideration. What does the word *Bible* mean? The Book. In the text: Holy Scripture.—But in this important passage attention is called, not to the giving of a name, but to the all-important origin and nature of the Bible.

THE HOLY BIBLE.

I. *The Author of the Bible.*

a. Who is the Author of the Bible? Not man; not man under God; not man and God, 2 Pet. 1, 19—21; but simply God. "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God." (*Theol. Quart.*, vol. I, No. 3, p. 257; *ib.*, vol. II, No. 3, p. 284.)

b. Why do we believe that God is the Author of the Bible?

a. Because the Bible makes such a profession in words, and sustains it by deeds. The New Testament speaks of the Old as the Scriptures breathed by the Spirit of God into the spirits of men, and of itself it affirms to be from God. (*Theol. Quart.*, v. I, pp. 258 f.) The Bible can set forth undeniable facts and statements in confirmation of its claims. Such facts are: the wonderful record concerning creation, Gen. 1. 2 (*Theol. Quart.*, vol. I, pp. 260 f.); the doctrine concerning God: one Godhead—three Persons; prophecy, Is. 41, 22—27; 34, 16 (*Theol. Quart.*, vol. I, p. 261); miracles, Mark 16, 15—20; the influence which the Bible exerts, Rom. 1, 16. Hebr. 4, 12. 13. (Illustrate!) β. Because the Son of God, who was put to death and returned to life, vouches for its divine origin. Without looking into our Bible, we find the following facts: In the sixty-seventh year of our era there were Christians at Rome and in other cities. They were so called from Christ, whom they asserted to be risen from the dead. Very many of them were put to death on account of their belief in Him. This was about thirty-four years from the time of Christ's crucifixion. Therefore these Christians who lived so near the time of Christ's death and resurrection must have been able to know whether that death and resurrection were fiction or fact.

II. *The purposes of the Bible.*

The apostle teaches that the Bible is profitable—

a. for doctrine. To teach, to communicate truth to such as would or should learn and know the truth;

b. for reproof. Confutation of error. Conviction. To convict sinners of their sinfulness, Tit. 1, 9. 13. 1 Tim. 5, 20. Tit. 2, 15;

c. for correction, sc. of spirit and life, that we may amend our evil ways and reform our manners;

d. for instruction in righteousness (*Theol. Quart.*, vol. II, 286);

e. to make us wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. It teaches our need of salvation, and reveals the plan of divine salvation: through faith in Christ Jesus.

III. *The properties of the Bible.*

a. Perspicuity or clearness. This is plainly asserted when the apostle says that all Scripture is profitable for doctrine. LUTHER:

“What it teaches can be found nowhere else. It is an unfathomable and groundless wisdom of God.” Ps. 119, 105. 130. 2 Pet. 1, 19. Ps. 19, 8. Eph. 3, 3. 4. John 8, 31. 32.—2 Cor. 4, 3. 4. John 8, 43—45. 47. 2 Pet. 3, 15. 16.

b. Sufficiency. The apostle asserts that the Bible is “able to make wise unto salvation,” and to make “the man of God perfect unto all good works.” It contains all that is necessary to salvation, Is. 8, 20. Luke 16, 29—31.

c. Authority. That is the property whereby the Bible justly claims, 1. that we “know it from a child;” 2. that we search the Scriptures, John 5, 39. 1 Pet. 2, 2. Col. 3, 16. Ps. 1, 2; 3. that we accept all its statements, Luke 24, 25. 1 Thess. 2, 13; 4. that we assent to all its teachings, 2 Thess. 2, 15. Luke 24, 25—27; 16, 29—31; 5. that we cheerfully confide in all its promises, 1 Thess. 2, 13. 2 Cor. 1, 20. Tit. 1, 2. 3. 2 Thess. 2, 15; 6. that we willingly obey its demands, Deut. 12, 32; 5, 9. 10. Ex. 20, 5. 6. James 2, 10. Josh. 1, 8.

J. C. A.

Expository Thoughts on the Gospel According to St. John.

JOHN 1, 1—5.

No doubt there are heights and depths in the precious Gospel of St. John which are far beyond man’s understanding. And yet there are good and plain lessons in it, which every Christian would do well to treasure up in his mind and heart. —The five verses now before us contain a statement concerning the divinity of our dear Lord Jesus Christ. He it is whom St. John means when he speaks of the *Word*.

THE DIVINITY OF CHRIST JESUS, OUR LORD.

I. *Christ’s existence from all eternity.*

a. “The Word” was in the beginning. What does John mean by the *Word*? Jesus Christ (“The Word was made flesh,” v. 14). Why does St. John call Him the Word? LUTHER: “John did it to point us back to the Old Testament Scriptures.” Again John did it because Christ Jesus is the Speaker, the Expounder of God’s will and Word, John 1, 18.

b. “In the beginning *was* the Word.” LUTHER: “When in the beginning God created all things, the Word was there already and had its being. By this St. John points out most powerfully that the Son of God was not created or made.” Christ Jesus was before all things, Col. 1, 17. He was, He existed from all eternity, Ps. 2, 7.

II. *Christ's coexistence with the Father.*

a. "The Word was with God." John here affirms that the Word and the Father were from all eternity two distinct Persons. LUTHER: "John insists hard on the little word *with*, . . . thus clearly distinguishing the Word from the person of the Father." The Word and the Father, though two distinct persons, are joined by an ineffable union, coequal and coeternal. It transcends our mental capacity to explain the nature of this union. Happy is he who can receive this great mystery as a little child, without attempting to explain it.

b. "The Word was God." Our Lord Jesus Christ is not a being inferior to God the Father. He is nothing less than perfect God. Two distinct persons, and one Godhead.

III. *Christ's agency in making all things.*

a. Christ Jesus is the Creator of all things, v. 3. He made the worlds and all that they contain.

b. Christ Jesus is the Source of all spiritual life and light, vv. 4. 5. He is the eternal Fountain from which alone the sons of men have ever derived life and light. Whatever spiritual life and light Adam and Eve possessed before the fall was from Christ. Whatever light anyone has obtained, it has all flowed from Christ. The light has been constantly shining in the darkness. The darkness comprehended it not. The majority of mankind refused to know, to receive the light; they forgot the fall and their own need of a Savior.—Would we know the great sinfulness of sin? Let us mark what kind of a being the Savior of mankind needs be, in order to provide eternal salvation for lost mankind. If no one less than the eternal God, the Creator and Preserver of all things, could take away the sin of the world, sin must be a far more abominable thing in the sight of God than most men suppose. To form a true estimate of sin's sinfulness behold the dignity of Him who came into the world to save sinners.—Would we know the strength of a true Christian's foundation for hope? Let us mark that the Savior in whom we are bidden to trust is nothing less than the eternal God, One able to save to the uttermost all that come to the Father by Him. In ourselves we are great sinners, but in Christ Jesus we have a mighty Savior. He is a strong fountain-stone, able to bear the weight of a world's sin.

JOHN 1, 6—14.

St. John, after beginning his Gospel with an important statement concerning Christ's divinity, proceeds to speak of His incarnation, of His office, and of His reception.

JOHN'S WITNESS REGARDING CHRIST'S INCARNATION, OFFICE, AND RECEPTION.

I. *Christ's incarnation.*

a. "The Word was made flesh," v. 14. The plain meaning of these words is, that Christ really took human nature upon Himself, in order to save sinners. He became a man like ourselves in all things, sin only excepted. He grew, Luke 2, 52, hungered, thirsted, ate, drank, slept, wept, rejoiced, read, prayed. He suffered, died, rose again, ascended up into heaven. And yet all this time He was God as well as man! This union of two natures in Christ's one Person is one of the greatest mysteries of the Christian religion. Two natures, one person.

b. "And dwelt among us." He tabernacled, or dwelt in a tent. He did not appear for a few minutes, for a brief visit of a few days, but lived among men for thirty-three years. He dwelt in a tent—which intimates, first, that He lived among us in poor circumstances. Why? Secondly, that He was in a militant state, having come to wage war against the old bitter foe. Thirdly, He dwelt in a tent, not as being at home.

c. During this time we beheld His glory. His glory flashed out from time to time, in His words, miracles, transfiguration, Passion. The glory as of the Only-Begotten of the Father. The glory was like, corresponds to, the glory of an only Son sent from a Father. It was the glory of one who partook of His divine Father's essence, on whom the Father's love was visibly lavished, and who represented the Father as His Ambassador.

d. "Full of grace and truth" (see v. 17). LUTHER: "*Grace* signifies that all He is and does is acceptable to God; *truth* means that everything He is and does is very good and right in Himself."

II. *Christ's office.*

a. John the Baptist, "a man sent from God," v. 6., was not the light, the expected and promised light, the fountain and source of light and life. He came to bear witness of the Light, of Christ. This is the true nature of a Christian minister's office: bear witness, testify. "That all men through him might believe." The great end of a Christian minister's office.

b. Christ Jesus was the true Light, the promised Light of sinners, the Light of the world, the true Source of light and life, the Messiah. This Light "lighteth every man that cometh into the world." "That is," says Luther, "what is to be enlightened must be enlightened through Him." Matt. 28, 19. Luke 2, 32. Whether men will see or not, Christ is the true Light of the world. There is no light, no salvation for sinners except in the Lord Jesus, Acts

4, 12. John 1, 29. — Mark 16, 16. Rom. 1, 16. John 3, 16. — Acts 16, 31.

III. *Christ's reception.*

a. Christ Jesus "was in the world" invisibly, long before He was born at Bethlehem, v. 10. John 1, 1. Col. 1, 17. Yet the world knew Him not, and honored Him not. Gen. 6, 3. ch. 11. 1 Cor. 10, 4—12.

b. Christ Jesus came visibly into the world, when He was born at Bethlehem, and fared no better, v. 11. (HOM. MAG., vol. II, No. 1, p. 8.) The Jews rejected Him, despised Him, slew Him, Acts 2, 23. And how is Christ Jesus received to-day? How is He received by you?

c. Christ Jesus will never be without some servants, vv. 12. 13. 1. If the vast majority of the Jews did reject Christ, there were, at any rate, some who received Him as the Messiah, Gen. 7, 1. ch. 19. 1 Kings 19, 18. 1 Cor. 15, 5. 6. Acts 2, 41. — Ps. 2, 8. Is. 53, 12. — 2. To them gave He the power to become the sons of God. LUTHER: "Here stands recorded both our shame and our honor, which He has bestowed upon us. The shame is great, namely, that we have hitherto been the children of the devil; but the honor is much greater, namely, that we are now the children of God." He kindly adopted us members of His Father's family. We are now, by the grace of God, God's sons and daughters. Rom. 8, 17. — 3. Privileges like these are the possession of all who receive Christ by faith, of all who believe in His name, Gal. 3, 26. "He gave them *power*," means, right or privilege. They are born again, regenerated, "not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." LUTHER: "This is an entirely new birth. And this divine birth is nothing else than faith. How does this come to pass? When a man gives up his own light and self-conceit, and is willing to be taught and enlightened, then, behold, he is changed in his main part, that is, in his natural light he is changed. His old light is extinguished, and a new faith is enkindled. This light he follows through life and death. Behold, thus he is now born of God through the Gospel, which he holds fast, and gives up his own light and self-conceit."

JOHN 1, 15—18.

Our text gives John the Baptist's testimony to Christ Jesus, the personal Word. The passage before us contains four great, important, and useful declarations about our dear Lord Jesus Christ. Each of the four is among the foundation principles of Christianity, and we can never learn them too well.

JOHN THE BAPTIST'S TESTIMONY TO CHRIST JESUS.

John bears full testimony,

I. *To Christ's dual natures.*

a. Christ's *divine* nature. "He was before me," v. 15. John here speaks of Christ's eternal being, preexistence. He was, not *ῥέγουμεν*, but *ἦν*, John 1, 1; 8, 58. *Before* is used of time, not of dignity or rank. From this we clearly see that the Lord Jesus Christ is true and eternal God, "begotten of the Father from eternity." "He was before me." LUTHER: "John the Baptist would say: In order that ye may not be offended at His humble, despised person and appearance, I will tell you who He is: He was before me, not as to the time when He was born into the world, but He is the Word which was in the beginning."

b. Christ's *human* nature. "He that cometh after me," v. 15. John here speaks of Christ's historic manifestation, of the time when "the Son of God became a human Son." (Luther.) "None of the Evangelists," says Luther, "emphasizes the article that Christ was true God and man as strongly as does John."

II. *To Christ's infinite fullness and grace.*

a. "Of His fullness have all we received," v. 16. Out of Christ's infinite fullness all believers in every age of the world have been supplied. He is rich in wisdom, righteousness, love, and mercy. Every saved soul in glory will at last acknowledge that he is Christ's debtor for all he is and has. Christ Jesus is all in all. Christ's fullness "is an inexhaustible fountain," says Luther; "it loses nothing by our drawing as much out of it as we want; the more we draw out of it, the more abundantly it yields such water that springs into everlasting life." Col. 1, 19; 2, 3.

b. "And grace for grace," v. 16. 1. *Grace*. The grace of God is the free and undeserved love, favor, and mercy of God towards man as sinner, especially as exhibited in the plan of redemption through Christ Jesus, John 3, 16. Rom. 3, 24—26. With it is united the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for our sins. LUTHER: "John speaks of two kinds of grace. *Christ's* grace is the unfathomable fountain of all grace, which he has called His fullness. *Our* grace is that which we draw from Him, and which He bestows upon us, and is given to us on account of His mercy, that we may be acceptable and pleasing to God."—2. *Grace for grace*. Grace upon grace, constant, fresh, abundant supplies of new grace, continually filling up and supplying all our spiritual need. One gracious dispensation succeeding another. Lam. 3, 22, 23.

III. *To Christ's vast superiority to Moses.*

a. "The Law was given by Moses," v. 17. Moses was employed by God as a servant, to convey to Israel the moral and ceremonial Law, Hebr. 3, 5. The Law which he brought down from Mount Sinai was holy, just, and good. But it could not justify. It could wound, but it was not able to heal. LUTHER: "The Law instructs me right well and shows me the life, and one must give heed to the instruction; but it does not impart the life to me; just as the guide-post shows the way, but does not lead."

b. "But grace and truth came by Jesus Christ," v. 17. Christ Jesus came into the world as a Son, with the keys of God's treasury of grace and truth entirely in His hands, Hebr. 3, 6. Grace came by Him when He made fully known God's gracious plan of salvation, by faith in His precious blood, and opened the fountain of mercy to all the world.—Truth came by Him, when He fulfilled in His own person the predictions and types of the Old Testament, and revealed Himself as the true Sacrifice, as the Lamb of God, the true Mercy Seat, and the true Priest.—No doubt there was much grace and truth under the Law of Moses. But the whole grace and truth of God respecting our gracious redemption were never so fully and plainly known until Christ Jesus came into the world, suffered and died for sinners.—Moses was a messenger of wrath, death, and damnation, 2 Cor. 3, 7—9. Christ Jesus was a Messenger of peace, love, mercy, life, and eternal salvation. This shows the vast superiority of Christ to Moses.

IV. *To Christ's oral teachings.*

a. "No man hath seen God at any time," v. 18. LUTHER: "Of the abyss of God's wisdom and will, and the unfathomable depths of His grace and mercy, and how it shall be in the future life, reason comprehends and knows absolutely nothing. We have received this from the only-begotten Son of God." The seeing here intended is seeing of the divine essence rather than of the divine person (which also is indicated by the absence of the article from *θεόν*, God).

b. "The only-begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him," v. 18. 1. "The only-begotten Son," the only one, the only one born. 2. "Who is in the bosom of the Father," who is with the Father (see remarks on v. 1). LUTHER: "Herewith John gives us to understand, and assures our heart, that the Word revealed by the Son is true beyond any doubt." 3. "He hath declared Him." Being in the Father's bosom He knew His secret counsels, and therefore was fully able to declare Him, to reveal and interpret Him to mankind.

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